

Union Hotel  
76 Main Street  
Flemington  
Hunterdon County  
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-732

HABS  
NO  
10-FLEM  
4-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## UNION HOTEL

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Address: 76 Main Street, Flemington, Hunterdon County,  
New Jersey

Present Owner: Henry Y. Shaffer estate

Present Occupant: The Union Hotel - Morris Schlapfer (lessee)

Present Use: Hotel

Brief Statement  
of Significance: Representative example of later nineteenth century  
hotel architecture

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Original and Subsequent Owners:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>
3/16/1807	William Bennet and Henry Reading (referred to as "The Tavern Property")	John James
4/2/1810	John James	Neal Hart
5/4/1839	Neal Hart	Mahlon C. Hart
3/1850	Mahlon C. Hart	A. V. Bonnell, Judiah Higgins, and Charles Bartles
4/1/1857	A. V. Bonnell, Judiah Higgins, and Charles Bartles	George F. Crater
12/1/1875	George F. Crater and wife, t/a "The Union House"	Lambert Humphrey and William Humphrey
1/3/1902	Lambert Humphrey	Joseph Chamberlin
	The Sheriff of Hunterdon County obtained the property from Joseph Chamberlin in 1906	
9/5/1918	Samuel D. Skielman, Sheriff of Hunterdon County	Henry Y. Shaffer

B. Date of Erection: 1877-78.

C. Architect: C. Graham and Son, 160 Fulton Street, corner of  
Broadway, New York, New York.D. Builder, Suppliers: Titus and Conrad Contractors, Trenton,  
New Jersey.E. Notes on Original Plan and Construction of Building: The fol-  
lowing was excerpted from "Agreement for building #176," May 3,  
1877. (Between Lambert Humphrey & Brother and Titus & Conrad,

Contractors, Trenton, N. J. - C. Graham & Son, Architects).

4.

the contractor agrees to the following: "By the first day of September, next 1877, erect and finish the first or South half of a new building to be built of brick for a Hotel in Flemington, Hunterdon County, New Jersey."  
price for job; \$6700.00

the agreement specifies: "slate and tin roof"  
"use best quality of Trenton pressed brick"  
"outside foundation walls, where exposed to view, are to be rough cast with lime and river sand laid off in courses"

"The construction of the North section to be completed containing stores (38' x 50') by February 1, 1878."  
price for job; \$6500.00

F. Notes on known alterations and additions: Three-story frame wing, with expanded first floor, located at the south end of the east (rear) elevation. One story brick wing located at the center of the east elevation. Dates and architects not determined.

G. Sources of Information

Primary and unpublished sources: Hunterdon County (New Jersey) Hall of Records. Agreement for Building #176. May 3, 1877. (Between Lambert Humphrey and Brother, & Titus and Conrad, Contractors - C. Graham & Son, Architect).

Hunterdon County (New Jersey) Hall of Records. Chain of Title Extracted from Deed Books.

Secondary and published sources: Hunterdon County National Bank. Serving Hunterdon One Hundred Years. A brochure prepared by Hunterdon County National Bank. Flemington, New Jersey: 1955.

Plan of Raritan Township, Hunterdon County. Surveyed by N. C. Sidney. Published by Richard Clark, 1850. (Map shows the location of the earlier Union House Hotel and slate-roofed stables which still stand).

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: Condition of fabric is good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Number of stories, layout, shape: Three-and-a-half stories; long rectangular block with two rear wings. Main block--100' x 38'.
2. Foundations: Rubble masonry.
3. Wall construction: Red brick bearing wall construction (painted white on the east, north, and south elevations of the main block and on the one-story rear wing). The three-story rear wing is frame with clapboard siding painted white.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing wall construction with wood beams spanning east and west.
5. Porches: Covered porch (two levels) extending across entire west facade of the building, 7'-7" deep. Elaborate wood lattice railing at the second level. Low-arched spandrel between the supporting columns at the second floor roof level.
6. Chimneys: Brick chimneys cut off at the roof level (ten total), two on both north and south walls; one on brick party wall at the center of the attic, two on west wall, three on east wall.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: West elevation--entrance to hotel through three sets of double glazed doors, each with segmental arched head, brick label and two-light transom above; entrance to the stores through two sets of double glazed doors, each with a large two-light transom above. East elevation--various service and utility entrances.
  - b. Windows: All windows on the first, second, and third floors are double-hung wood sash with brick segmental arched heads, the openings in the west elevation having brick labels. West elevation, first floor--one-over-one light; second and third floors--two-over-two lights. All the remaining openings in the main block have four-over-four lights. Attic windows--double-hung wood sash, two-over-two lights. Central truncated tower has twin window with curved pediment--the end towers have dormers with single openings with triangular pediments; the remaining dormers have arched windows (two-over-two lights) with gable roofs. Sectioned

octagonal bay projects from the second floor at the west end of the north elevation; three, one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes; plain brackets support simple cornice and iron cresting.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: First floor--plan essentially a long rectangle (longer side facing Main Street) with two wings projecting from the rear (east) elevation; large dining room and kitchen on south end of building (part of which is incorporated in the southernmost of the two wings); the main hall extends from the front to the back of the main section, has direct access from the porch, and separates the dining room from a large lobby (also with direct access from the porch); the hotel bar is to the north of the lobby; two stores complete the first floor plan at the extreme north end of the building. Second and third floors--hallway runs through the center of the main block (on the north-south axis) with flanking guest rooms; hall to the south of the main stair (on the east-west axis) leads to the rear wing. Attic--large loft space divided at the center by an 8" brick party wall.
2. Stairways: Unadorned dog-leg (two-run) stair extends from the main hall on the first floor to the attic. Narrow utility stair at the east end of the southernmost rear wing.
3. Flooring: First floor--patterned terra cotta flooring in the bar, lobby, and main hall; carpeting in the dining room. Second floor, rear wing--random-width pine flooring. Second and third floors, front section--modern vinyl flooring. Attic--5" tongue-and-groove flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Intricate embossed metal ceilings with metal cove cornices in the dining room, hall, lobby, and bar. Embossed metal wall covering in the lobby with a high dado rail and 1-1/2" flush board wainscoting. Modern murals on the walls of the dining room with chair rail and wainscoting beneath. Remaining wall and ceiling surfaces of the first three floors are plaster with either paint or paper covering.
5. Doors and doorways: First floor--heavily molded four-panel glazed doors. Second and third floors, front section--simple molded four-panel doors to the rooms with two-light transom above. Second floor, rear section--plain (recent) four-panel doors with covered transoms above.

6. Decorative features: Embossed metal wall and ceiling covering in the first-floor rooms. Elaborate terra cotta floors in the first floor (consisting of small circular tiles laid in decorative patterns).
7. Lighting: Modern, surface mounted.
8. Heating: Modern central heating.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and general setting: Situated on the east side of Main Street in the center of the Flemington commercial district. Bounded on both the north and south sides by an alley and a smaller commercial structure.
2. Outbuildings: Slate-roof stable on the north side of the lot to the rear of the hotel.

Prepared by John D. Milner, Architect  
National Park Service  
March 1963